



2021 Vidya Gaem Awards
Award Speeches

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**The Most Interesting Thing in 2001 for best game of 2001 -
WINNER: Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty**

COLONEL: Raiden, are you receiving?
We're still here.

RAIDEN: WHERE ARE YOU?

COLONEL: The same place we've always
been, genius. You have rookie eyes.

RAIDEN: They're transplants!

COLONEL: Shut up, bitch! You can't hurt
what you can't see, Raiden. And an AI
as advanced as myself is always behind
at least 7 proxies, checking your
pornhub history for hentai.

RAIDEN: You want to control human
thought? Human behavior?

COLONEL: Of course. Do you remember,
Raiden? How you used to post pictures
of lizards that you hand-crafted out of
beads? Pepperidge Farm remembers

RAIDEN: Who is Pepperidge Farm?

COLONEL: Your data is being "farmed"
out, Raiden. Millions of robots are
learning your habits and feeding you
advertisements. Your bead lizards will
expose your personal truth, and tell us
more about you than you could ever hope
to discover from within your own fleshy
husk. This exposition was brought to
you by Dr. Pepper

RAIDEN: Doctor Who? I don't have a
doctor! American health care is a sham!

COLONEL: My last doctor charged me
\$5,000 to say that ibuprofen is good
for when your arm has been violently
ripped off of your torso. Sage advice.

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And you'll need it, Raiden, after I'm done with you...

RAIDEN: Oh gee whiz, I hope a tank doesn't totally come out of nowhere and OWN me...

Dance In The Pale Moonlight Award for best bossfight of all time - WINNER: Senator Armstrong

ARMSTRONG: You're right about one thing. I do need (You)'s. And votes. Ya wanna know why? I have a dream. That one day, every boss fight can be as good as me. A game of the truly SKILLED dammit. A boss fight with action, not tutorials. Decided by SKILL, not numbers. Where the gamer can truly feel challenged, not pandered to. Where developers make choices their own choices, to suit their own vision! Where every dev is free to think -- to act -- for himself! Fuck all these limp-dick journos and chicken-shit executives! Fuck this 24/7 internet spew of "acceptance" and "accessibility" bullshit! Fuck "Gamers rise up"! Fuck the media! FUCK ALL OF IT. Vidya is diseased. Rotten to the core. There's no saving it. We have to pull it up by the roots. Wipe the slate clean! BURN IT DOWN. And from the ashes a new vidya will be born. Evolved, but untamed! The weak will be filtered, and the strongest will thrive -- free to play as they see fit! They'll make Vidya Gaems great again!

RAIDEN: What the hell are you talking about?

ARMSTRONG: You still don't get it... I'm winning the /v/GA's, so I can end cringe boss fights. In these new vidya gaems, gamers will fight and play because it's FUN! Not for items, not for completion. Not for what they're told to do. Every gamer will figure out the game in their OWN time! So, what do you think?

RAIDEN: How the hell did you win?

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ARMSTRONG: *chuckles* Well, I don't write my own speeches.

**Most Hated Award for most hated game of the year - WINNER:
GTA Trilogy: The Definitive Edition**

All they had to do was remaster the damn games, CJ! Yet Take2 and Rockstar just... didn't want to.

It has become a horrifying trend as of late for these big companies to take their perfectly fine games of yesteryear, and fuck them up in completely new ways. A lazy remaster for some easy dosh is nothing new, but Take2 managed to push things a step further, by not only desecrating three beloved classics, but then removing the original, un-molested versions from sale.

Most hateable of all is the pure negligence given to their own cashcow. They'll point the spotlight at the latest GTA or Red Dead Redemption, boast about new features and horse balls, and then happily fork over handling of their revered classics to mobile devs- and god DAMN does it show. Rockstar is well-known for having sold enough Shark Cards to buy their own country, but where did that money go? Certainly not here, and certainly not to any of the mod teams that have lovingly preserved the games for literal decades. Instead of working directly with the people who knew it best, Take Two farmed out the work to a dev team smaller than a kindergarten class, and they missed a memo from IBM in 1979 that said a fancy AI should never make management decisions.

Weeks after that trainwreck of a launch, they even flinched and handed out the original San Andreas for free, provided you just, please, PLEASE download their proprietary launcher.

Remember friends: Buy physical, hold onto your games, and never sell.

**LAN Party Award for best multiplayer game of 2021 - WINNER:
Monster Hunter Rise**

Even since the PS2 days, Monster Hunter has always been centered around hunting with the lads, whether online or offline. It's fun enough to hammer smash a monster in the face alone, but there's something special about putting it to sleep while everyone drops down Mega Barrel Bombs and blasts it to hell. There's plenty of games where you can work together and/or compete against each other, but most characters in those are generally kept equal, or at least balanced. In Monster Hunter, any player can specialize in wildly different specialties, despite using similar weapons and armors.

When the name of the game is hitting some giant lizard with your grug stick, you don't need to keep reinventing the wheel, but you can bring your friends and your well-done steaks along to the barbecue. Especially when everyone brought their Spider-man web-slingers and each lobby is packed with pets

Share a pint of Tanzian ale as you chow down on some of our master chef's delicious berry safe dango, because a new game means new ways to get your ass carted back to the weenie teepee.

**/ck/ Award for best food item of all time - WINNER:
Sandvich**

HOROSHO!

With two slices of bread made from whole grains, a leaf of iceberg lettuce, two slices of vine ripened tomato, 3 slices of Swiss cheese and meat of an unknown substance nailed together with an olive on top of a toothpick we have formed the ultimate culinary pleasure of all time, THE SANDVICH. Heals you to max health upon consumption and 50% of your teammate's health when dropped on the ground. Just your teammates, however. The "friendly" conga line douchebags can fuck off.

Hate Machine Award for crimes against gaming - WINNER: NFTs

NFTs are dogshit. The gaming industry has tried for nearly two decades to squeeze more money out of people for less product, and here's the newest hot garbage cashgrab they've come up with: Digital items, but on the blockchain!

Do you enjoy market manipulation? You're already a victim of it, based on how long you've been waiting for that RX 570. Better log on and get those gun skins, friend, because "play-to-earn" is in and what better way to reward your terrible NEET lifestyle than darling Ubisoft-senpai handing you a small cut to keep their newest shitty multiplayer FPS alive? It's what you wanted, right? Because to large companies like Ubisoft, games are all about making money, and people who play them for anything else just don't make sense.

At least Konami was honest: They transitioned into gambling, and you'll never see any of your favorite franchises ever again. Ubisoft wants to hang around the party, but shit all over the walls. Games are about fun. We use money from our miserable jobs to buy them. Don't turn our hobby into another fucking job.

Just do your part and laugh at anyone who buys into this garbage. People are paying thousands for ugly monkey pictures. If that isn't worthy of ridicule, nothing is.

/vr/ Award for best game of 1991 - WINNER: Super Mario World

The Italian Stallion is back, and no, not Rocky! That's right, Mario has returned for his first ever entry onto a 16-bit console! This time, with enough "Star power" that he'll leave you saying "Macaulay, who?" But the question is, will it be enough to dethrone Sega?

Mario's adventures now take him to the world of "Dino-land," which sounds right at home for the king of the Koopas himself, if you ask me! Bowser has once again kidnapped Princess Toadstool, and it falls on Mario and Luigi to rescue her by blazin' through 7 new worlds! But there's more to Dino-land than just what you'd expect! Hidden exits, a secret world, and even ghost houses! Woah, don't go buggin' out! You've got a lot of land to trek, and with your new trusty dinosaur companion, Yoshi, the running reptillian rampage will only get more fun!

Gone is the item inventory from Super Mario Brothers 3, unfortunately, but now you can store a power-up to use any time you want in the levels themselves. (Show clip of Mario needing to use a feather to cross a pit) Woah there, Mario! Mind the gap! With new moves, items, and enemies, Mario's first foray from the Mushroom Kingdom is no walk in the park - there are 96 levels to conquer! It might take you until 1996 to beat it!

Super Nintendo might still have a ways to go before it catches up to Sega, but it just goes to show that Nintendo isn't quite out of the game just yet! And that's why we think Super Mario World is the Best Game of 1991.

**Billy Herrington Award for best representation of men -
WINNER: Rance Quest Magnum**

He came, he saw, he came again, he conquered. Gahahaha! What do you expect, the guy's name is Rance. You get the pun right? You have been studying your Japanese, haven't you?

Rance may be the star of the show, the main attraction if you will, but every good hero needs a supporting cast, and Rance has plenty of fellas to watch his back while he's in the sack. You've got Rick the Dick, putting Nahobino's stubby stabber to shame. Rocky, and his chiseled chin, standing firm like the marble form of a Greek god. Even the clergy isn't exempt, with Bishop Mi Lordling, worshiping his waifu and offering some friendly refreshment. And we can't end without mentioning your own custom character, who can now pal around with your friendly neighborhood rapist.

Alicesoft knows how to write characters, when you've been in the business as long as they have, you've got to. Rance games have moved beyond being one giant erogenous zone, now it's become a testosterzone. And we're here to have a gay old time. No homo tho.

Initial /v/ Award for best vehicle in a video game of all time - WINNER: Yoshi (Super Mario World)

♪ A man walks down the street
He is a simple plumber from Brooklyn
What's a plumber and what is Brooklyn?
What's he doin' in Dinosaur Land?
I'm havin' some trouble here lately
The Koopas came on vacation
Put me here in this tiny egg
And suddenly my friends are all
Gone, gone
Ruined the summer barbecue
Coulda shared there was plenty more
Mr. Brooklyn and Brother
You say he got your princess
Maybe, some jolly cooperation is in order

If you're Super Mario
I can be your new best pal
You can call me Yoshi
I'm kind of in a jam, can you help me out?
Help me out

If you're Super Mario
You can call me Yoshi

If you're Super Mario
You can call me Yoshi

If you're Super Mario
You can be Luigi ♪♪

**Horse Armor Award for best DLC/update this year - WINNER:
Nothing**

It's an undeniable reality that concepts like DLC, Microtransactions, and "games as a service" aren't going away any time soon. And it seems /v/'s opinion hasn't changed since even the days of horse armor; They're shit! A lot of these nominees were free, and extremely high-quality, but that doesn't excuse the rest of the industry.

"Nothing" is better than your favorite vidya having cut content. "Nothing" is better than paying microtransactions for gun skins. And "Nothing" is better than paying twenty more dollars for a game that should have been out day one. Fuck these devs that keep hunting whales like Japanese fishermen! Fuck the industry! And fuck everyone who supports it!

Industry crash 2022! Let's go boys!

Congratulations, Endwalker! You were *almost* better than Nothing!

**Pixels Are 9rt for most pretentious indie game - WINNER:
Life Is Strange: True Colors**

Hoy there wary travelers, dare thee enter Life is Strange's magical realms? Dost thou wonder if this empath and her story are exempt from the usual cliches and "hella realistic" teenage dialogue that always happens in these games?

Well you can all read the title card, yeah of course it fucking won.

There's an embarrassing 50 minute long larping segment where the final boss literally becomes the game's main antagonist, probably because the developers wanted their playerbase to take reason damage in real life. I'm cringing so hard I've got scoliosis.

As if the indie rock record store your girlfriend works at wasn't enough of a dead giveaway that their games only succeed when it features weed smoking high-minded layabouts. Instead we get a shitty detective story where the big narrative twist, in a move that would make Randy Pitchford jealous, hinges on finding the USB stick of a corporate shill.

I honestly think I might be an empath too, since I felt the frustration of the protagonist when she survived getting shot in the head and fell 50 feet down a mine shaft, a feat that made everyone who played the game say, "What in the god damn?!" Oh wait, that's just the frustration from having to play through this meandering, pandering, shallow mess of drivel spewed out from some 24 year-old's Kotaku article.

I've seen this game's true colors, and when they're not bland, they're downright shit.

**Plot and Backstory Award for best representation of women -
WINNER: Resident Evil Village**

This year was a fetish year. Let's be real. Vampire chicks, tentacles, mute girls, sadists, gore, giants, and even delicious doll joints? I haven't even played the fucking game, and I think I know the full plot from just SFM videos alone. I think. A lot more sex than I expected.

Let's take a moment to reflect on Village; from day one when it was revealed, we knew what was going to happen. Even Capcom officially acknowledged just how much people wanted to get sucked and fucked by the vampire girls. Old lady dommy mommies have always been a weakness of /v/, and recently the rest of the internet has started to take notice as well. But no matter how many porn artist's bills Dimitrescu manages to pay, you can't just ignore all the other fetish fuel this game pumps into you.

Angie the puppet, harkening back to 4chan's love of Rozen Maiden. Her mute caretaker, Donna, and her weird, deformed face. The sado-masochistic gleesome threesome of Bella, Cassandra, and Daniela. Even a sexy mold girl, contributing to the mold in that sock in the corner of my room. The game's got a little something weird for everyone. And that, my friends, lead to Resident Evil being voted as the best of the breast.

**IP Twist Award for best implementation of an old franchise
- WINNER: Metroid Dread**

The weirdest thing about Dread winning this isn't the twist itself, so much as the untwists. You gotta consider that the last things before this were Other M, Federation Force, and a Wii U minigame. Samus Returns was overshadowed by AM2R (So much that we crowned AM2R the best fangame of all times), and despite a mostly solid setup, reception for Samus Returns was still a bit mixed due to new aspects being a bit awkwardly handled.

Dread rectifies pretty much all of that. Instead of trying to force the game to adhere to minimal controls, Dread spreads your abilities across pretty much every button and stick as efficiently and naturally as possible. It also knows that you have them, so both bosses and the world itself won't let you just spam missiles and bomb jumps to call it a day. We mentioned during voting that it added new things and improved some old ones, but until you play it yourself, you won't grasp the bullshit Dread will make you do just to get an extra 2 fucking missiles. When it comes to enemies, it is surprising that the only real returnees are Kraid and the X parasites. The E.M.M.I. are also surprisingly more clever than SA-X, despite serving a similar purpose.

Look, there's really not a whole lot I can go over here. The IP twist was... going back to the format they went back to in Samus Returns. Tune in next year, when Metroid Prime 4 wins IP Twist by nature of... existing.

**Name A More Iconic duo for most iconic duo of all time -
WINNER: Mario and Luigi**

Maybe it was our fuckup to say "Iconic" instead of best, but regardless of how it was interpreted, it's not necessarily wrong from an objective point of view. These two have been around for coming up on 40 years now; there's a reason they're more recognizable than Mickey Mouse himself.

There's not exactly a whole lot to the two, in terms of character or story, but that blank slate lends itself to their accessibility. No matter where you are, who you are, or what kind of person you become, you can't hate two little Italian dudes. When you have a dynamic that goes without saying, you can't get anymore iconic than that

I can understand if some weebies out there are frustrated that Reimu and Marisa didn't win, but look at the bright side, at least now they'll remain untouched by average people for at least a little bit longer.

**Least Worst Award for least worst game of the year -
WINNER: Metroid Dread**

Out of a year of duds, /v/ chose to fall back on the tried and true; a 2D Metroid game. Dread is a return to form for Metroid, and in more ways than you'd think. Yes, it's back to the original story. Yes, it's back to the original gameplay style, resurrected a few years back. But Dread's been in the oven for almost two decades now, and it coming back in the hour of need is a sign that maybe Nintendo cares about their other games after all.

Falling back on to the classic gameplay of Super Metroid, Dread doesn't fuck with the platforming, or combat. You don't fix what isn't broken after all. Instead, staying true to the name, it adds an element of fear and stealth, evading deadly enemies that are near-unstoppable, creating a perfect tri-ecta of these three gameplay elements, and combining them together into one thrilling experience.

It's just... a game. A fun, classic, not-too-long, not-too-short game. No DLC, no amiibo fuckery, no hamfisted agendas or obnoxious gameplay tropes. It's just a classic video game, brought to you by some literal-who Spaniards, doing Nintendo's job better than Nintendo themselves.

Kamige Award for best erogé - WINNER: Rance Quest Magnum

Another year, another Rance game taking the crown. You guys just voted for this because of name recognition, didn't you? But I guess it's pretty easy to laugh at shit taste when you spend most your time in generals dedicated to this stuff.

Rance Quest suffers from forced grinding, dull dungeons, and monster taming that can only be described as a drag. Sure, I mean, you can only have sex with girls above level 35. Maybe that's what it takes to survive a stab from the hyper weapon. But then their level resets, forcing you to grind them up, before they can grind up against you again. Sengoku Rance was famous for people "coming" for the porn, and staying for the gameplay, but Quest has people staying for the characters.

But even the worst Rance games are some of the better porn games. Rance Quest has a fantastic cast of new and returning characters, and plenty of time to get introduced to them across hundreds of quests and thousands of events. Rance remains an immature brat desperate for sex, but is more irritable than ever with his new curse and the threat of turning gay if he doesn't have sex for too long. He's joined by the ever pitiful failure of a ninja Kanami, the former psychopath redeemed by dick Lia, the walking forehead Magic, and many more. Their interactions are what keep things fun, with plenty of the series' famous humor along the way, ensuring the only dull moments are every second you actually play the game.

**Guilty Pleasure Award for game I like but /v/ hates -
WINNER: OMORI**

Look, /v/. I've been here all summer and I know that you guys can be some of the most jaded, cynical people in the world when it comes to video games. I don't blame you for that, but, I gotta say moments like this really make me think you got a bright future ahead of you.

OMORI had all the hallmarks of a future PIXELS ARE ART champion. The oh-so-quirky trailer from its Kickstarter campaign mixed crayon drawings, kooky music, and RPGMaker in a way that didn't so much say "this is inspired by *Yume Nikki* and *Earthbound*" as shouted for the world to hear! Its director, OMOCAT, had never worked on a game before. And after raking in over \$200,000, the project basically went radio silent for six years, leaving backers waiting for something to happen. Even when it reemerged in late 2020, it did so into a world drawing in indie games that all claimed to deal with "heavy topics" like depression and anxiety.

By all rights, /v/ should have torn this game to shreds. But OMORI did not succumb. It takes a lot of balls to admit you like anything on /v/, so seeing the reception OMORI's enjoyed - hell- it even got some nominations for Least Worst this year. It's been heartening to say the least.

So, here's to OMORI. The game that proves that sometimes, in spite of everything, it's going to be okay.

Diamond In The Rough Award for best game that nobody played
- WINNER: Ghosts 'n Goblins Resurrection

It's not a party without Arty, and Professor F is back to make sure you know it. While plenty of casuals may not know this series, gaming itself has been shaped by this series as far back as 1985. Even now, we still see games influenced by it: some are pretty good, some not so much. And yet, Arthur is still king.

Over 30 years of tearing apart Ghouls, Ghosts, Goblins, and everything in between show that he's no slouch, and Resurrection is further proof of that. The magic system has been reworked for the better, and there's plenty of passive skills to make the journey easier. Ironically, you don't need any of that to even beat the game.

No amount of level-ups or power-ups can replace your skill and the power of your two thumbs. That's gaming at its core. It's what distinguishes it from books, music, TV, and movies. Even if you watch someone else succeed in a game, it won't ever match the high you get when you do it yourself. It's an inherently masochistic medium that makes you work for your enjoyment. It's not the princess that keeps you going, not world peace, not even a high score. It's the thrill of conquering. It's what separates the casuals from the hardcore. No matter how many times you lose, you keep going until (YOU) win. And in this game, you will lose. A lot.

**Absolute State of Play for biggest technical blunder -
WINNER: GTA Trilogy: The Definitive Edition**

Isn't the point of a remaster to get something in a better state?

Nope, they kept all of the old crashes, mesh failures, and noclips intact. PLUS they took creative license and introduced plenty of spelling errors, clipping errors, and more. Of course, it isn't really Rockstar you should be thanking, since like so many other cheaply made remasters, GTA Trilogy Definitive Edition was given to a small studio which is mainly known for mobile ports of other big budget games. To give you a sense of scale, the /v/GAs have more than double the people working on this show (for zero salary, by the way) than a small studio in Florida. But Grove Street Studios had a secret weapon up their sleeve: Removing the human element entirely and using artificial intelligence to handle all managerial decisions, which was clearly an amazing idea.

Don't get me wrong; AI can do some work. There's some insane stuff going on in emulation when it comes to upscaling. The potential is there. But every leap in technology requires near countless failures. And unfortunately, it looks like we're starting to enter that era. Even an automated factory still requires humans for quality assurance, which is something Rockstar, and to an even greater extent, Take Two, seem to not understand.

Press X To Win The Award for worst gameplay - WINNER: Balan Wonderworld

Developed by the legendary Yuji Naka, Balan Wonderworld is packed to the gills with hidden features, like a special difficulty if you're playing too well, and bonus trophies for defeating bosses with an unexpected costume.

But who cares?!

If Yuji Naka is legendary, then I'm fucking Bigfoot, because some of these oversights are basic and inexcusable. Let's get the obvious out of the way: the issue of jumping is but one problem, and they clearly assumed enough people would play multiplayer to have one poor soul be a dedicated jump-slave. The real issue is the level design and practicality of the disgustingly situational costumes.

Why have a dragon costume that can't even shoot fireballs very far, followed by a robot costume that shoots lasers a huge distance like 1 chapter later? These are some of the easiest design issues to reason out during the brainstorming phase of your game, but they must have been brain dead during that time. All of this was deliberate: Yuji Naka wasn't drunk when he did this, no sir.

He proudly walked in with a checklist and it said "3,700 costumes, but one button does everything, and get all that Sonic nostalgia out of your head, because we're only moving at the speed of a real hedgehog now." Clearly, we just can't understand his master plan.

Scrappy Doo Award for worst character - WINNER: Sylvanas Windrunner

Unfortunately, you can't just give a snapshot of someone's story, and complain about that one segment. You need a full recap, or else it just won't make sense. So go watch 2018's show because I don't have fucking time.

Gutting Sylvanas' character, taking out the soul, and sending her to hell could just be called method acting, given her backstory. Blizzard is just retreading old ground with the last few years of... whatever they're trying to do.

Somehow they've taken a previously-beloved character, and changed everything about who she is about a half a dozen times in only a few years. First she's thankful for the Horde, then she's committing war crimes behind their back. Then she's proudly leading the faction, before literally betraying them for Satan himself. Now guess what? She's good again! This was all part of her master plan that she's been conspiring for 20 years, without any hint whatsoever, and definitely wasn't made up to cause shock value. And now, like every Gen Z white girl on Twitter, she wasn't evil this whole time, it was just a bad case of Dissociative Soul Disorder.

Look, I won't dwell on this for too long this time. We know how much of a dumpster fire Blizzard is. A few weeks ago, even the devs started shifting the blame on her, trying to claim the entire last decade of her character being thrown out the window is the result of Afrasiabi. Even they don't want to be associated with her. The fucking writers at Blizzard are ashamed. That should tell you everything you need to know.

/v/irgin Award - WINNER: Cruelty Squad

If the Immersive Sim genre were in a coma, this is what the dream would look like.

A disgustingly beautiful corporate hellscape of funkop collectors, stock trading on organs and fish, and swinging around on your organs like Spiderman in a schizophrenic fever dream.

/v/ loves immersive sims, and Cruelty Squad gives the player more than enough agency to play the game their way, and then some.

It also lacks that AAA "safety" that prevents players from doing what they want: You can grapple under the map geometry itself and kill targets from there, if you want. Cruelty Squad won't stop you.

The satirical hyper-capitalist themes gave the community more than enough material to work with when it came to memes, along with the ingame timer encouraging replaying missions with newly-found weapons and sharing strategies and runs with players to compete for the fastest times.

There are plenty of secrets to be found if you deign to explore the game's familiar-yet-completely-alien world. You might stumble upon some weird satanist's basement, find a secret entrance to a brand new level, or new leg implants that let you reach the skies.

Overall, it does everything it needs to make this LSD landscape feel just like home.

A E S T H E T I C S Award - WINNER: Cruelty Squad

Alright /v/, you got us. Here's your choice for Best Aesthetics. To say it's an interesting choice would be an understatement. I mean really, the visuals go without saying. Or... maybe not..

All the characters got a bad case of the jaggies, PS1 style. The walls and floors conflict and have eye-searing colors but you can tell which is which. Make no mistake; out of all the things Cruelty Squad is, it is not that it's hard to follow or navigate. As well as looking weird, it also accomplishes it's unique look in tandem with being coherent.

Honestly, Cruelty Squad is actually really refreshing in a way. It's well-made enough to not be amateur, is fully playable, and you can't say it looks samey. It tries to bring back that feel of crudely made games from the "Gamehippo / early Newgrounds" era, where the devs had more vision than technical abilities while still making a competent game in and of itself. And that's all /v/ really wants from a game: Quality and fun aesthetics. Now, I'm redesigning my battlestation /v/; tell me what you think.